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THE PROPER TRANSLATION OF THE WORD FOR USE IN PUBLIC WORSHIP.

THE Word of the Lord is the voice of the Lord speaking to all men whom He has created. Inmostly it is Himself, the thoughts of His own heart. He knows that no one can understand Him perfectly, and He does not speak with the expectation of being perfectly understood, nor, indeed, with any selfish regard to Himself. He loves angels and men, and little children, and He speaks to them all such things as He sees will be helpful to them. To angels He declares the wisdom which reveals the order and nature of the heavens, and by which they may be perfected; to men He reveals, according to their receptiveness, many things in regard to spiritual, moral, and natural life, and especially His own life when upon the earth; and to little children He tells Divine stories of human life, especially of His own life, from which, with the simple precepts of the Word, they gather ideas of good and evil which are interiorly full of heavenly and Divine ideas.

It is from Infinite Mercy that the Lord thus looks down from heaven, and speaks to all His children in language and ideas perfectly suited to them. His purpose is to teach them to distinguish between good and evil, to walk in the ways of goodness, and thus to live from Him. And when even the simplest read the Word from love for the good life

which it teaches, their minds are open to the influence of the Lord and of heaven.

"The Word of the Lord," [Swedenborg says,] "when it is read by a man who loves it, and who lives in charity, and even by a man who from a simple heart believes what is written, having formed no principles contrary to the truth of faith contained in the internal sense, is displayed by the Lord to the angels with such beauty, and with such pleasantness, accompanied also with representatives (and this with an inexpressible variety according to the whole state of the angels at the time), that every particular is perceived as if it had life." (A. C. 1767.)

Speaking of the Word again, particularly of the prophetical Word, he says, —

"In the literal sense, scarce anything appears but a something without order; nevertheless, when it is read by man, particularly by a little boy or girl, it becomes by degrees, as it ascends, more beautiful and delightful, and at length is presented before the Lord as the image of a man; in and by which heaven is represented in its complex, not as it is, but as the Lord wills it to be, namely, as a likeness of Himself." (A. C. 1871.)

This unfolding of the interior senses is an unfolding of the ideas conveyed by the letter to the minds of the readers; for, as Swedenborg states, in the same connection, —

"All the particular expressions occurring in the Word form their respective ideas; for the expression is nothing else than an idea thus formed in order that the sense may be rendered perceptible; and in the ideas are contained things so innumerable (which cannot come to the perception of man, but only to that of angels) as to exceed all belief. When these ideas are opened by the Lord, more interior forms are presented to the perception by joys and felicities, and to the sight by representative and paradisiacal scenes; the former from the celestial and spiritual things of the Lord's love and mercy, the latter from the rays of light thence. It was shown me by wonderful experience that the Word is inspired, not only as to all the particular expressions, but also as to

all the particular letters which compose every expression, and thus, as is also declared, as to the smallest iota; for in every iota there is something of the affection and life common to the general expression, which are thus correspondently insinuated into the minutest particulars." (A. C. 1870.)

"He who does not know how the case is, may conjecture that the Word as to the literal sense is thus annihilated, by reason that this sense is not attended to in heaven; but it is to be known that the literal sense of the Word is in no way annihilated thereby, but rather is confirmed, and that the single words derive weight and are holy from the spiritual sense which is in them, inasmuch as the literal sense is the basis and fulcrum on which the spiritual sense rests, and to which it coheres in the closest conjunction; insomuch that there is not even an iota or apex or little twirl in the letter of the Word which does not contain in it the holy Divine." (A. C. 9349.)

In these passages we find both the true principle and the difficulty in regard to the translation of the Word for common use. It is clear, on the one hand, that the translation ought to present the natural sense of the Bible as fully as possible to the minds of little children; and, on the other hand, it appears that there is precious meaning in the very letters and dots, which cannot possibly be translated. What then shall be done? Our answer is,—Bring all possible helps — such as literal translations, Hebrew manuscripts, and instruction in Hebrew — to those who can profit by them; but do not fail to bring the most external natural meaning in the simplest language to the minds of children; and this must be the language for general public worship. The letter of our Word, like the letter in the heavens, Swedenborg says, may be understood by the simple in simplicity, and by the wise according to their wisdom. But to speak to the simple only in the language of the wise is to cut off from them their Bread of Life.

There are four difficulties in the way of a perfect rendering of the Hebrew Bible in English, three which are common to all translations from one language into another, and one which is peculiar to the present case. The peculiar difficulty

is that there is meaning in every dot and letter, and little turn of a letter in the Word (A. C. 9349), which is true of nothing else. This is especially true, we are told, of the letters as written in the ancient forms; but less so of our printed forms. But the ancient written copies are inaccessible, though doubtless some exist; and very little is known of the force of the individual letters, and their little horns, even if we had them. Precious meanings, no doubt, will be learned from these by future generations; but not much is given to us, and nothing that affects the question of translation unless it be that where there is a choice of vowel sounds it may be well to select those most nearly resembling the Hebrew.

The next difficulty, which is not peculiar to this case, is that there are words in Hebrew which include the meanings of several English words, and *vice versa*, so that it is impossible always to render a Hebrew word by the same English word, or even to present its meaning exactly by any words. A single Hebrew word stands for *wind*, *breath*, and *spirit*, besides many emotions of the spirit. The Hebrew word for nose — in the dual, nostrils — stands also for the anger that expands the nostrils. Examples of this kind are numerous. But, on the other hand, in our Bible the word "prince" represents eleven different Hebrew words — not necessarily so many, but in fact — because of the difficulty of finding appropriate words for the Hebrew distinctions. The Hebrew words for garments of various kinds also have no exact English equivalents, because we have no such garments. Under one or another of these three heads, the words which cannot be exactly translated are very many.

A third difficulty is that the natural order of words is not the same in Hebrew as in English; and, further, that fewer particles are used; so that the sacred order must be considerably changed to enable English ears readily to collect the sense. For example, the sixth, seventh, and eighth verses of the first chapter of Genesis, word for word, are as follows, — we present them reverently, acknowledging the

sacredness of their order, to show that they need accommodation to the idioms of our language: —

"And spake Gods; Let be expanse in midst the waters, and let be dividing between waters to waters. And made Gods the expanse, and divided between the waters which from beneath to expanse, and between the waters which from above to expanse; and it was so. And Gods called to expanse, Heavens; and was evening and was morning, day second."

This is not farther than usual from the English order; but obviously it must be considerably modified before it can be usefully read in our worship.

The last difficulty to which we shall call attention, appears in the *figures* of the Hebrew language, by which the Hebrews expressed familiarly ideas which would not be suggested by the words to foreign ears. For example, it is said in Isaiah v. 1, "My beloved hath a vineyard in a horn a son of oil;" which certainly is quite unintelligible to English-speaking children. But when we know that a conical hill was sometimes called a "horn," and that it is according to common Hebrew forms of speech to call a fruitful thing "a son of fatness" (which is a legitimate rendering of the word for oil), we gather at once the idea of "a vineyard in a very fruitful hill," which is the expression in our English Bible. We believe that this meaning was gathered from the words as a matter of course by the Jewish children, and that it is the part of the Divine meaning which we should present to our children; though the Hebrew idiom also is valuable to those who can use it.

In the same idiomatic phrase, a child or a lamb, *a year old*, is called "a son of a year;" and the gourd of Jonah, which grew in a night, is called the "son of a night." *My friend* is called "the man of my peace" (Ps. xli. 9); "such as be at peace with him," or friendly, are called "his peaces" (Ps. lv. 20); *starving men* are "men of famine" (Isa. v. 13); and *holy things* are usually things "of holiness."

Occasionally Swedenborg translates the Hebrew words in

a sort of spiritual-natural sense, which undoubtedly is contained in them, but as certainly was not the natural sense to the Jews; as, in Ps. civ., which in its letter is a poetical description of the creation of the world, the fourth verse undoubtedly was understood by the Jews, "Who maketh the winds His messengers, the flaming fire His ministers;" but is rendered by Swedenborg, "Who maketh spirits His angels,"—truly, no doubt, but quite beyond the ideas of the Jews, who knew nothing about making spirits angels.

Enough has been said to show the impossibility of presenting in any translation all the particulars that properly belong to the letters of the Word; for, the sense of the letters and turns is beyond our reach, and even if we understood it we could not translate it; and the Hebrew idioms do not suggest to others than Hebrew scholars the familiar natural sense. These all are sacred, all are full of the Lord; and it is evident that they, as well as the several spiritual senses, rest and are contained in the outmost sense, which consists of such natural appearances as even children and the simple-minded can understand. And this, it seems to us, is the sense which should be generally used, especially in public worship; the others also having a most important use, as they are constantly used by Swedenborg, in the unfolding of the inner meanings of the Word.

This natural sense can be almost perfectly presented in every language of the world. Our English Bible, much as it needs revision, presents it with remarkable faithfulness and sagacity. This is the great merit of the English version, even greater than the reverent beauty of its language. It is by virtue of this that it is so enjoyed by children, and comes home so close to the hearts of all humble English-thinking people. And however valuable a Bible written in spiritual language may be to spirits, a Bible in Hebrew to Hebrews, and a Bible in Hebrew idioms to students, for simple English people a Bible in English idioms is necessary to bring the Word of God in fulness into their thoughts and lives.

THE STUDY OF USES.

We are inclined to the belief that comparatively few understand the nature of the use that they are engaged in performing in the world. We think that there are not many who give much attention to the subject. Still fewer, according to our estimate, are aware how intimately heaven is associated with the faithful performance of their daily work, — how completely it is closed to those who are dishonest and unfaithful in doing it.

The religious world, for many years back, has been engaged in separating doctrine from life, faith from action. We, at the present time, have seen much improvement in the public teaching of the day. Theoretically, or intellectually, the attempt has already begun to be made to reunite affection and thought, faith and a good life. Deep down in the ultimates of life, however, we see the stubborn roots of the old dogma of faith alone remaining, and they cling with a tenacity to the practices of life which shows plainly that the work of eradicating the falsity and evil has not been all done, but has only recently commenced. The intellect, as the forerunner of the will, has become somewhat instructed, but the vast depths of the heart have not as yet been sounded to any great extent, by the characteristic doctrine of the New Church, — the Doctrine of Life.

If our intellects have so fully entered into the doctrines of the New Church that we have no doubt remaining as to their authenticity, we yet know that the progress of New-Church life is slow, and almost imperceptible.

The opinion that was advanced that few understand the nature of use, what it is, and what it is intended to do, for others and ourselves, is fully substantiated by facts. Young men entering into the work of life frequently do not appreciate the uses from among which they are to choose their life's vocation. They commonly select their calling upon grounds of expediency. The questions most frequently

asked are, "What will pay the best?" "What can be easiest and soonest learned?" The quality of the good which each one of these uses is meant to dispense to the world is not generally perceived or deeply considered. And the seeker for a situation is not, as a general rule, apt to take much time in examining whether there is any internal aptitude in himself for the work proposed.

The relation between the person and the employment is not thoroughly explored to see if it be a vital relation, assumed for developing spiritual life, or whether the pressing motive is the desire of a temporary make-shift to get money or worldly honor. The correspondence between the man and the duty is not usually carefully studied. Instead of looking at the *use*, the *return* and selfish ease are regarded in the performance of work. Thus we see that use has become inverted in men's minds. The highest thing, the good to others, is lowest, and selfish advantage the highest.

We well know that this state of things is not confined to the young. Middle-aged and even old men regard the profits of business as its most prominent feature. The dream of the middle-aged man is of the time when he can leave off working and get rid of his ordinary function as of something irksome. He works to get money; when the money is earned that he calls sufficient, he desires to retire from business. If there was generally pervading the community a real love of doing uses, we should not find this restless desire to get out of business on the part of those in it, or the lust of money-making the leading motive of those out of employment, but who are in search of it.

This inverted and perverted way of regarding work is in direct opposition to the whole spirit and teaching of the New Church. To be New Churchmen we must suffer our worldly and selfish loves to be controlled and led by the principle of regarding the good of others first, and the return to ourselves last. For we know that heaven is called by Swedenborg "*a kingdom of uses*." He also employs these strong terms in relation to it, —

"Angelic happiness is *in use, from use*, and *according to use*." — A. C. n. 454.

The love of use, and the faithful performance of it, are the only things that insure heavenly happiness, because they constitute heaven itself. As we realize more fully in our hearts that heaven rests upon that love, and that its delight is from its activity, we shall give more attention to studying the particular truths of our own calling, and shall also be more eager to know the general rules of conduct in others' uses.

As more deep and serious reflection is given to the subject of use, there will be greater permanence in business and professional life. There will be fewer changes when use is truly considered, because men will not then rush blindly into any pursuit. They will wait until they have examined it, and their ability to do it. They will search for their own internal desires as well as for the distinguishing characteristic of the internal of the use. If they love heaven, the "kingdom of uses," they will desire, above all things, that they may come into that particular use which is adapted to them. It would be preposterous to claim that every one is prepared to judge in early manhood, even with the best use of his faculties, just what he is fitted to do through life, for states change. Many are obliged from necessity, also, to do what they do not love. It is often necessary that one state should be developed by temporarily beginning some duty, not specially or interiorly adapted to us, before the final work can be selected, or before a man can know what he is internally fitted to do. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt but that those who strive to look for their lives' work from the light of interior truths, and from the teaching of heavenly affections, are spared some, if not many changes. For all voluntary changes in business or profession occur, because men find out things in themselves and in the requirements of their work which they did not know in the beginning. If they had looked at their work from interior

principles, their internal and their eternal relation to it would the more fully appear.

The ability to communicate to the growing mind which manifests a desire to be useful, clear views of the different uses of life, is one of those great and important things which should be constantly cherished and cultivated by New-Church parents, and friends of the young. It is well known that some of the most serious troubles of life are those connected with the selection of a vocation. If light can be thrown upon these matters, as it surely can be from New-Church teachings, it will confer a blessing upon the young, and the community.

But the need of studying uses is not confined to the young, or to the old for the sake of the young. The study of use is a life study, which no one ever fully exhausts. As we progress towards the higher kingdom we see more and more how much there is for us to learn in the way of use that the Lord has opened for us. So, too, do we realize more fully from day to day, how we need to love use, and to love it from Him.

Swedenborg, it will be remembered, says, "All wisdom is of the life." If this is so is not all wisdom of *use*, or from the understanding and love of use? And are we not, each one of us, wise or foolish precisely to the degree that we have sought for or rejected the affection of wise, orderly ways of doing our work? If our affection and thought derived from heavenly things are not embodied in our use, then they are not in our life, or in us. They are extraneous to the will, and are merely intellectual.

The way into wisdom is through use, and doing uses is the method of obtaining wisdom. He, therefore, who seeks for the true, innocent wisdom of the old man, must obtain it by constantly rising into more interior appreciations of the heavenliness of use, and into a more thorough and deep love of it.

The study of use, for its own sake, can only take place when there is an acknowledgment of its heavenly character.

Therefore children, and young persons, should be early instructed to look upon every honorable employment with feelings of the deepest respect. They should be taught to regard the different forms of use, and love them as so many nurseries of heaven. Their minds should be turned to consider the good that is within use, and this good should be referred to the Lord and the neighbor. Everything should be done to avert the attention from the selfish way of regarding business from its return or emoluments. We should turn round, as far as we are able, the inverted picture of life, so that they may see the head and the heart, where before they were looking at the feet. The nobility of every useful kind of labor, and the spirituality of use, should so be presented, that they may appeal to the heaven within the person, and so lead him to choose from his heaven the work that he will do. In this way he will be helped to put heaven into his use when he begins to act in it.

The very conviction that a work is a use, is a means of opening the mind to see its peculiar qualities. For when we are truly convinced of this, we acknowledge the Lord and heaven in their real, substantial existence on earth, and they, therefore, readily flow in and instruct us. When we believe that a certain work does a certain good to another, especially if we are ready to love the good, then it is easy to discover it, and the means, that is the truths, that lead to it. When the truths of a use are seen, then we know what we must have to wisely and successfully do that use. He who makes a sincere application of these knowledges to himself goes through with the process of deciding the question in the proper manner, as to whether he is fitted for the use before him. All other ways of ascertaining the true answer from the outside, are always more or less uncertain and deceptive, because coming from self.

It is also very helpful for all of us to get as clear, general ideas as we can of the uses that others are performing; for all have more or less to do for others, and they can better do that which is their duty to do to them, by having some com-

prehension of the use that they are in. There is no union of friendship so strong, so enduring and useful, as that founded upon mutual understanding and sympathy in one another's work. When at work we meet our greatest discouragements. He who has some idea of what we are doing, and some love and respect for our use, is best adapted to help us. Faithfully trying to acknowledge the good that others do, broadens our love and knowledge of humanity, and better fits us for our own special use.

While in the work of our calling, we experience the good and the bad of our nature in their fulness. Good is most delightful when employed in *use*, and evil is most easily discernible when it opposes use. Here, then, is the place to practise repentance, for here we can *easiest see* evil, and we can more readily *get rid of it*, because we are assisted by the full power of the good.

Turning one's mind towards heaven in interior reflection, and with the desire to be led by the Lord to do faithfully our work, is productive of the greatest effects. Every one who asks to be helped in performing his use, is answered. If we pray from use, we ask from heaven, and in the Lord's name, or quality, for He is an infinite doer of uses, and this is true prayer; prayer that He Himself tells us will always be heard and answered.

SACRED MUSIC.

I. ITS HISTORY AND ORIGIN.

THERE is every reason to believe that music has been associated with Divine worship from the earliest times. Away back in the Golden Age, Jubal, as we read, was "the father of all such as handle the harp and organ." In explaining this passage, Swedenborg gives only its spiritual sense; but the mention of the harp and organ produces an irresistible impression that those instruments could not have

been wholly unknown. There is, indeed, no period, however remote, no people, however rude, which does not show signs that music (or something that was called music) was one favorite means of expression and enjoyment. We should naturally expect that it would be so; for music is one of nature's own methods of uttering certain feelings, — of bringing forth into the field of outward observation what would otherwise lie concealed in the secret chambers of the heart.

And wherever the Divine Being is known and worshipped, the sounds of music would, almost of necessity, ascend to Him. This would be especially the case in times of joy and exultation, of deliverance from enemies, or of victories over them. Accordingly we find that the first song recorded in the Scriptures is that of Moses and the children of Israel, when they had escaped from Egypt and safely passed through the Red Sea. "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto Jehovah, and spake, saying, I will sing unto Jehovah, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." When this is concluded, we read further, that "Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them, saying, Sing ye to Jehovah, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."

After this we find only occasional mention of music and singing among the Jews, until we come to the time of David. In his reign, and that of Solomon, the musical development of the chosen people appears to have reached its highest point. We are told in the historical book of the Chronicles, about the singers, chief of the fathers of the Levites, who were employed in that work day and night; and how David numbered four thousand men who praised the Lord with instruments, and of those that were instructed in the songs of the Lord, two hundred fourscore and eight. But the principal evidence of the fact that the Lord at that day was variously

praised with vocal and instrumental music is afforded by the book of Psalms. Not only were the Psalms used in the service of the temple, and ever afterwards, as the forms Divinely provided for expressing the genuine sentiments of Divine worship, but they are full of phrases and allusions which throw much light on the whole subject. "To the chief musician, a Psalm of David," "A song of degrees," "A song of loves;" such are among the titles which they bear. By expressions like the following they show the purpose which they served, and the customs of those who made use of them: "O come, let us sing unto Jehovah: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms." "Sing unto Jehovah with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm." "Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works." The variety of musical forms, and the great number of instruments employed, are plainly indicated; as, for example, "It is a good thing to give thanks to Jehovah, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High: to shew forth thy loving kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night, upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound." "Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery. Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day." "Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high-sounding cymbals."

After the epoch of David and Solomon had passed away, the musical service of the Israelites waned, together with the glory of their kingdom and church. When, at last, they were carried captive to Babylon, their tuneful voices grew wholly silent. Then, it is said in that most mournful of the Psalms, "We hanged our harps upon the willows in

the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the song of Jehovah in a strange land?" After the return to Jerusalem, and the rebuilding of the temple, they took again their harps, and sang again their songs, but never with the former power and fulness.

Coming down to a later date, we find a memorable instance of singing mentioned in the Scriptures. It is at the very point of time where the Jewish Church leaves off, and the Christian Church begins. At the Lord's last supper with His disciples, it is said that they sang a hymn. The word "hymn" is not used here in the exclusive sense which it has acquired in modern times, but signifies any song of praise to God. It is generally understood that, on the occasion referred to, the Lord and His apostles sang the Hallel, or special selection from the Psalms, which was assigned for the Passover service.

Music has always been a marked feature in the worship of the Christian Church. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, said, "When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm." He exhorts the Colossians: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." The apostle James says, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms." From that time forward all authorities agree that singing was a prominent part of the church service. Of its character, and of the changes which it has undergone from one period to another, we may have occasion to speak at a future time.

Having now taken, as it were, a bird's-eye view of the history of sacred music, sufficient, at least, to show us that it has, without doubt, been universally used in the worship of those who professed to believe in the one God and His holy Word, let us briefly consider its intrinsic nature, and the causes of its helpful influence.

In every word which a man utters there are the two distinct elements of sound and articulation. There is the tone of voice, admitting of various modulations, and the divisions into words and syllables, by which different utterances are distinguished from each other and made the fixed vehicles of thought. The one supplies the substance, the other the form, of speech. And the one corresponds to the affections of the will, and the other to the thoughts of the understanding.

No argument is needed to prove these correspondences. Every one must see that when a man speaks, the tones of his voice indicate the affections from which he speaks, and the articulations convey the peculiar ideas or thoughts which he desires to express. When he is angry, or grieved, or terrified, we do not need to hear what words he utters in order to learn the fact. The tone is generally all-sufficient. The gentlest words spoken in a harsh voice lose all the effect of gentleness, and the loving heart betrays itself even in the language of reproof. How often has the voice played the part of tell-tale to the words, when one who would fain have disguised his thoughts, could not disguise his feelings!

Now music is the art or science which deals with melodious sounds. It, therefore, corresponds to, and represents, affection. Affection is the language which it speaks. Nothing stirs the emotions so surely and quickly as music. Nothing can be so provocative of fun and merriment; nothing can so easily start the unaccustomed tear. The sound of the trumpet is often more potent in battle than the voice of the skilled commander. A strain of familiar music may melt the obdurate heart, when all other means have failed. There is no logic or reasoning in music; it appeals directly to the affections, and inspires them with fresh life and energy.

We may now assign a reason for our intuitive perception of the eminent appropriateness of music as a part of Divine worship. The singing is, from its nature and correspondence, peculiarly expressive of the affections which should

enter into worship. The feeling of love as regards the Lord, and our relations to Him, can find a more full and perfect utterance in singing than in any other way. If we were in the complete order of our creation, then would our love for all that is good, and true, and beautiful, break forth spontaneously from our lips in the form of music. Swedenborg says, —

"The singing of heaven is nothing else but an affection of the mind, which is emitted through the mouth as a tune." (C. L. 155.)

And music on earth is born of music in heaven.

OBADIAH THE PROPHET.

Of the man we do not know anything, except from his vision. Of the meaning of his book we know but very little, except from Swedenborg, and by means of a science which he taught. Very much has been written, both by Jews and Christians, concerning this prophecy; and the historical facts contained in these writings, as well as in Josephus, will be of great use to the New Church. It is the smallest book in the whole Word, consisting of only one chapter of twenty-one verses in less than seven hundred words.

No other chapter in the Sacred Scriptures has probably received so much attention as this. It has been carefully examined and studied by theologians, biblical scholars, and Jewish wise men. Swedenborg, without the least regard to these writers, or to what they have written, has explained it very fully, and from his writings the spiritual sense of all of it may be learned.

The name Obadiah signifies, literally, "servant of God," and this may be the only reason that it was a very favorite name with the Jews. We may believe that it was a favorite name with the Hebrews and their fathers before the days

of Abram; for it is composed largely of vowels, and ends with the letter "h." Abdallah is the same name with the Arabians, and this is a favorite name with them. It is pleasing to all people to find that an object they love is called by a name which they delight to hear or speak.

We cannot possibly imagine a writing more pleasing to the posterity of Jacob than the vision of Obadiah the prophet. Jehovah, by his servants and prophets, had so many times warned Israel of judgments to come, and had pronounced such fearful woes upon all the house of Jacob, because they had not, would not, and never would obey His voice, that when an Hebrew prophet, speaking from their own God, turned all his words of wrath, condemnation, and destruction upon their most bitter foes, whom they hated as only they could hate, then we may fail even to imagine how precious this book was to them, and still is to the few remaining Jews. But we shall see that no intelligent people, Jews or Christians, have ever taken the book literally. We may see, also, that no writer before Swedenborg could tell why it was written that Jehovah hated Esau and condemned Edom, or why He loved Jacob, and promised so much to Israel. Perhaps the Jews that lived in Obadiah's time, and many Christians that have lived within the last hundred years, together with a few still remaining, have taken the vision most literally.

One interpretation quite common with modern Jews may be sufficient to show that the Israelites always believed there was a meaning beyond or above the literal sense. This rendering may be stated in a few words. Edom, they say, means the Roman empire; Mount Esau, the city of Rome; Edomites, all Christians. They maintain that the Christians sprung from Idumeans, and that Edom, Esau, Idumeans, all mean Christians. Jacob, of course, means themselves. "Sarepta" is "France"; "Sepharad," "Spain,"; "saviors" the Jewish Messiah and his chieftains, who were to be "judges."

They read that shame shall cover all their enemies, and

that all these shall finally be swept from the face of the earth; and that all things worth possessing shall be restored to them. Then, after all their enemies have been destroyed, they shall reign and rule in prosperity and peace forever.

Scarcely less intensely interesting has the vision been to Christian theologians and biblical scholars. The delight which these have taken in the study of this book has been increased by the perfect freedom which each has felt in making his own theory, and understanding the book as he pleased. The first few verses are taken literally, or as slightly obscured by figurative Oriental ways of talking. It seems quite wonderful to these writers that all things have taken place as herein foretold; and one of the charms in the book to them is the fact, as they see it, that this prophecy has been more perfectly fulfilled than any other in the Bible. Still they acknowledge that some of it is a mystery as yet, and has not yet been fulfilled. So far as condemnation and destruction are declared, these Christians bestow it all upon the Edomites, and see all this perfectly fulfilled. But after the first nine verses, they think they see signs that Obadiah means Christians when he says Jacob. And if Jacob means themselves, then his enemies mean their enemies, or those not in the Christian Church; though if they would think of what they must know, they would see that the greatest foes of every church have been members of it.

Still reading on, they conclude that all the promises of good are to the Christian Church, and that the Jews can have no part or lot in the matter, except as they become converts to their doctrines. Having disposed of the Edomites, and robbed the Jews of what in the letter seems intended wholly for them, they appropriate all the promised future glory to themselves, and seem to believe, and perhaps many do actually think, that the doctrines invented at a famous council, and the religion based upon this cunningly-contrived compromise, will finally triumph over all minds. Still reading on, these Christians are lost in the same maze which enveloped the learned Jews. The Jews put a very low,

natural, fanciful meaning to the last verses, while the Christians see little more than a mystery clothed with mere names. The wisest of the Christian writers acknowledge that the last verses of this, and many other chapters of the Psalms and Prophets, point to what John saw on Patmos, and described as well as he could in the last chapters of the Revelation. Certainly these writers do not accept the book as it reads in the letter.

At last, but long before the Christian writers ceased to speculate about the meaning of the vision, the Lord, by means of a man, made known much of the real, which is the spiritual meaning of this book, and provided a way by which all of it may be rationally understood, even the last verses. The reason that Swedenborg explained it so fully seems to be because it treats of an evil which is very destructive to man, and which was, and is, very common in the Christian Church; and, in treating of this evil, he confirms the truth of his words by referring to the Word, as recorded in Obadiah.

The whole book is a vision or sight or knowledge of spiritual things. God spake, or wrote it, by Obadiah, so it matters not whether Obadiah understood it or not. But God spake all these words to and for men, as well as angels, and not merely to men and angels then living, but to us and future generations as well. This book does not in the letter warn the Jews against any of their evils, or directly give them one word of advice. Yet it was for them to preserve, and could not be intended for the good of the Edomites, so far as man can see. Neither is it possible to see that it has been of much use to the Christian Church as men in this world, though we do not know how much use it may have been to the spirits of men here in the world. That the sacred writings may be of use to men, they must be in relation to some natural things, and concerning people whose peculiar characteristics are known to those who will understand the Word. Hence the reason that this book was written just at that time when the Edomites represented

perfectly the evil of self-intelligence, particularly concerning the Word.

No matter what state, condition, or world a man may be consciously in, he cannot receive a description of, nor himself describe to men, what he has no idea of. This does not apply to Obadiah, but it does apply to those who will understand the vision.

When we see what is meant by Edom in this book, we shall know how important a true history of the Edomites is to us, and shall see what the writers upon the book have been led to do for our pleasure and profit, so far as they have adhered to historical facts. A knowledge of these people is requisite to the right understanding of the evil of self-intelligence. Israel and Edom both lived when they did, and as they did, that the Word might be written.

Edom here means the evil of self-intelligence and the perversion of the letter of the Word. Edom, as the name of a people or of an individual, means those whose ruling love and chief delight is in their own and their particular friends' self-intelligence in spiritual things. The first nine verses describe the actual conscious life of those in the other world, before their final judgment, who have lived here to the end of life in the love and pride of self-intelligence concerning the Word. "Esau is Edom." Esau in this book means love of self, which is the opposite of love to the Lord.

In particular, the whole vision treats of the end of the Jewish Church and the descent of the New Church. The Christian Church was a preparation for the Lord's true and intelligent church on earth.

In the New Church it is necessary for all to see and know their own evils, and Obadiah treats concerning an evil common to all, and one greatly beloved and fondly cherished in our day. This paper is intended mainly to help those who wish to know and shun their own evils as sins, to understand what Edom means.

All Christians believe that our Lord fulfilled the word of the Old Testament, though all may not see clearly what this

means. He lived here about thirty-three years. At some time he began to fulfil the Word, and He finished this work upon the cross. We believe that He began in His infancy to fulfil what is written concerning Abram from his call and entrance into the Land of Canaan; and that as He progressed in His glorification, He fulfilled all that is written in the Word of the Old Testament, and much more that might have been written concerning the states of the Israelitish Church until its end, and the establishment of the Christian Church. We believe that Abram represented the Lord, and that afterwards Isaac represented Him. Or, in other words, that Abram's life for a time represented states through which our Lord passed during His infancy and childhood; and that Isaac's life for a time represented His states when older.

Jacob and Esau were born to represent two distinct principles in our Lord's Humanity which were so intimately related in Him that only twin brothers could represent them. Jacob was born to represent Divine truth, and Esau Divine good, both in the natural principle or natural degree. We do not know at what age the Lord became conscious that God was His father, but it seems that He knew this at twelve years of age, and we may be allowed to think that this knowledge first came to Him while on the journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem, with Joseph and Mary, when He was twelve years of age; for sitting with the doctors, He knew that God was His father. And, sitting with the doctors, He may have fulfilled the ninth verse of the twelfth chapter of Genesis, which reads, "And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south."

What Esau was born to represent could have no place in the Jewish Church, for that church was wholly external, without an internal, or it was the representation of a church, and not a real church. A church could be represented by means of truth without goodness, and so Jacob could represent this.

Nearly all names in the Word have two significations, and one is the opposite of the other. Esau, as named in Obadiah,

means the evil of the love of self, which is the opposite of what he was born to represent. When Esau is said to be very hungry and weary, which represents an earnest desire for spiritual nourishment or instruction, he was called Edom. The difference between Esau and Edom is this: Esau signifies natural good without a knowledge of doctrines or the commandments, and Edom the same goodness with this knowledge. Or, in other words, when Esau is instructed, he is Edom. Therefore, Edom in this book means self-intelligence concerning spiritual things, which is a form of self-love called Esau. Esau is Edom; or love of self is the soul of self-intelligence.

A knowledge of the new doctrine of opposites is as useful in understanding good and evil as steam is in the affairs of this world. When one understands the goodness which Esau or Edom represented, he can understand the evil which is treated of in Obadiah. Self-intelligence, meant by Edom in this book, is the fountain-head of evil works; the mother of original sin. It was this which caused the fall of man, the flood, the end of the Jewish Church, and the desolation and final consummation of the first Christian Church.

We have already alluded to the fact that Christian writers have believed that the last verses of this vision point to a millennium, or that time and state of life in this world foretold by John in the twenty-first and twenty-second chapters of the Revelation. The spiritual sense of these verses presents a picture of human life which those most enlightened in spiritual things can see but dimly. Nothing to be compared with it has, at least since the Golden Age of antiquity, been seen or known in this world. If by means of that least possible fraction of an acknowledgment of the Lord's divinity, woven in with irrational doctrines, He was able to hold this world conjoined to heaven for fifteen hundred years, and then, by or from the acknowledgment of His supreme divinity, by a scattered very few, He has advanced the inhabitants upon this earth from where they sat one hundred years ago to where they now stand, then who

can form the faintest idea of what life in this world will be when even those who profess to confess the Lord shall, in sincerity of heart, acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ to be the One God of heaven and earth, and worship Him? This time and this state of life is pictured and described in the wonderfully arranged words of the last verses of the vision of Obadiah the Prophet.

CARLYLE AS AN ESSAYIST.

It was not altogether complimentary on the part of Mr. Carlyle to mass the people of this country, with one twirl of his pen, into a group of so many millions of "bores." Nor was he intending, perhaps, to rival "the lascivious pleasing of a lute," when he asserted that the twenty-seven millions of Great Britain, existing at the time of his writing, were "mostly fools." As *Punch* turns this latter tilt into ridicule, so we may have *our* laugh at the rough old Scotchman's fling; and need not, in a spirit of petty revenge, close our ears against the many good things which he utters.

The style of Mr. Carlyle is a kind of stratified conglomerate, sparkling here and there with clusters of crystals, but impressing one continually with the idea of massive strength. His dialect can scarcely be said to be "Babylonish," yet the peculiar characteristics of his manner are as marked as the verbal idiosyncrasies of Hudibras. Apparently his vocabulary has been thrown into a kind of mental kaleidoscope, as it were, and after being subjected to a vigorous process of shaking and revolving, is presented to our vision in words, now, perhaps, shaping forms of surpassing beauty, and now constructing pictures as homely and rugged as that wrinkled cheek of his which lies half concealed beneath its tangle of grizzly hair.

Here are a few paragraphs illustrative from the prose-poem "Past and Present": —

"Brave sea-captain, Columbus, my hero! it is no friendly environment this of thine in the waste, deep waters; around thee mutinous, discouraged souls, behind thee disgrace and ruin; before thee, unpenetrated Night. Brother, these wild water-mountains, bounding from their deep bases," [ten miles deep, I am told,] "are not entirely there on thy behalf! Meseems they have other work than floating thee forward; and the huge winds, that sweep from Ursa Major to the Tropics and Equators, dancing their giant waltz through the kingdoms of Chaos and Immensity, they care little about filling rightly, or filling wrongly, the small shoulder-of-mutton sails in this cockle skiff of thine! Thou art not among articulate, speaking friends, my brother; thou art among immeasurable dumb monsters, tumbling, howling, wide as the world here. Mutiny of men thou wilt sternly repress; weakness, despondency, thou wilt cheerily encourage; thou wilt swallow down complaint, unreason, weariness, weakness of others, *and thyself;* — how much thou wilt swallow down! Yes, my world-soldier, thou will have to be *greater* than this tumultuous, unmeasured world here round thee is; thou in thy strong soul, as with wrestler's arms, shalt embrace it, harness it down, and make it bear thee on — to new Americas, or whither God wills!"

There is a majestic roll in the flow of these sentences which is like the sweep of a wave of the ocean. A healthy exhilaration must always follow the reading. It will be noticed that, incidentally, at the close of the passage, as if merely to round off the period — and it is none the less significant, perhaps, on that account — instead of a grand gloriation over the regality of human prudence, there is a genuine recognition of Divine Providence. Let us give the author full credit for that.

Here is an extract from "Sartor Resartus," which indicates more than ordinary insight on the part of the writer into certain truths: —

"All visible things are emblems; what thou seest is not there of its own accord; strictly taken, is not there at all. Matter exists only spiritually, and to represent some Idea, and *body* it forth."

Another passage in "Sartor Resartus" develops a more erratic vein: —

"To such as have reflected on man's life, and discovered that Soul is not synonymous with Stomach, that for man's well-being Faith is properly the one thing needful; to such it will be clear, that for a pure, moral nature, loss of religious belief is loss of everything. Is there but an absentee God, sitting idle, ever since the first Sabbath, at the outside of His universe? Has the word Duty no meaning? — Foolish Word-monger and Motive-grinder, who in thy logic-mill has an earthly mechanism for the Godlike itself, and wouldst fain grind me out Virtue from the husks of Pleasure; is the heroic inspiration we name Virtue but some bubble of the blood? If what thou namest Happiness be our true aim, then are we all astray. Not on Morality, but on Cookery, let us build our stronghold; there brandishing our frying-pan, as censer, let us offer sweet incense to the Devil, and live at ease on the fat things *he* has provided for his Elect!"

This passage contains a fair example of the peculiar verbality of our author; and the caustic satire which is embodied in it, gives an illustration, too, of the spirit of the writer. He esteems himself, no doubt, and we may clearly acknowledge him to be, one of the world's great champions of Truth. On an external plane, in a rough way often, his stalwart arm has done yeoman service in her behalf; and if, as Pope before him did, he occasionally makes free use of ridicule, —

> "That sacred weapon for the Truth's defence,
> Sole dread of folly, vice and insolence,"

We ought rather to thank him for his vigorous blows, than to quarrel with him about his method.

Swedenborg, in his calm way, says: —

"The real worship of the Lord consists in performing uses; and uses consist, during man's life in the world, in every one discharging aright his function in his respective station." (A. C. 7038.)

Most eloquently, in his own especial manner, Carlyle elaborates this idea. Neither the vagabondizing, unwashed democracy, nor the army of non-producers occupying the

opposite extreme of society, find any mercy at his hands. Hear him discourse on the subject of Labor: —

"Work, and therein have well-being. The highest God, as I understand it, does audibly so command thee. He, even He, with his *un*spoken voice, awfuller than any Sinai thunders or syllabled speech of Whirlwinds; for the SILENCE of deep Eternities, of worlds from beyond the morning stars, does it not speak to thee? The deep Death-kingdoms, the Stars in their never-resting courses, all space, all time, proclaims it to thee in continual silent admonition. Work is worship. All true work is sacred; in all true work, were it but true hand-labor, there is something of divineness. Sweat of the brow; and up from that to sweat of the brain, sweat of the heart, which includes all Kepler calculations, Newton meditations, all science, all spoken Epics, all acted Heroisms, Martyrdoms — up to that 'Agony of bloody sweat,' which all men have called Divine! O my brother, if this is not 'worship,' then, I say, the more pity for worship; for this is the noblest thing yet discovered in God's sky. Who art thou that complainest of thy life of toil! Look up, my wearied brother, see thy fellow-workmen there in God's Eternity; surviving there, they alone surviving; peopling, they alone, the unmeasured solitudes of Time!"

Certainly, these are fine utterances; and while the noble words are ringing in our ears, how dwarfed and insignificant appear all the miserable follies which dance attendance upon that school-miss phrase, "gentility." Our robust author sees nothing manly, nothing "epic," in snowy shirt-frills and French genuflexions. With more than Hotspur's contempt, he would spurn the popinjay who complained of the passing of a slovenly corse "betwixt the wind and his nobility."

There is a deal of what Mr. Carlyle calls "snobbery" in the world. It is a form of pride which protrudes itself into all communities; and it often plays very "fantastic tricks," even here, where "Democracy" is the pet-word of a nation. It is a kind of thing which as widely differs from true nobility as does consummate selfishness from Christian charity. It is of the earth, earthy, —

> "Yet let me flap this bug with gilded wings,
> This painted child of clay,"

That manifests ever a sullen indifference, alike for every shout heralding an onward step in the march of human improvement, and for every wail over the weaknesses and woes of humanity.

The so-called aristocracy of that charmed circle — the circle of the Select — with its pretended refinement; its vaunted æsthetic tastes; its asserted monopoly of gentle manners, dashed with the pride of "repose;" its boast of superior culture on intellectual planes; its lofty claim to exclusive respectability, like the philosophy of the transcendentalists curtained behind a misty shroud, will often be found to be based upon very hollow assumptions, where the veils are thrown aside. The blunt author of the Latter-day Pamphlets would order off to the rear, all the shams which are a remnant of the feudal times. "Aristocracies," he says, "actual and imaginary, reach a period when parchment pleadings do not avail them." "Descend," he cries, "descend, O Do-nothing Pomp; quit thy down cushions; expose thyself to learn what wretches feel, and how to cure it!"

He would call to the front the aristocracy of Goodness, of Truth, of genuine Charity, of high Honor. He would echo Tennyson's song: —

> "Ring out the old, ring in the new;
> Ring out the false, ring in the true;
> Ring out the grief that saps the mind;
> Ring in redress to all mankind;
> Ring out false pride in place and blood;
> Ring in the common love of good."

We are living in an age which differs not much from the preceding — an age of Semblances. Selfishness in manifold forms puts on all manner of garbs; and the masks are so artfully made up, and often worn with so much grace, that, more frequently than otherwise, the world remains deceived

to the end. It needs great keenness of vision to detect the False where it skulks behind those glittering veils, and it requires courage to strip the gilding off the knaves. And here we have the man for the task; for Thomas Carlyle has a sharp eye and a stout heart! He discards all sort of sympathy with scoundrelism. He would drag forth into the sunlight, for the public gaze and the public scorn — and take delight in the work of baring — "the mean heart that lurks beneath a star;" he would hiss and hoot at "the pride which apes humility;" and — lower down — he would give the sneaking and cowardly thief hard fare and rough usage behind thick prison-walls; and — lower still — he would furnish the assassin with a halter. There he stands — the brave old man — breasting like a giant, as he is, the whole current of *fashionable* opinion in regard to certain movements which are called Reforms. The feeling which finds a voice to enter its whining protest against capital punishment for atrocious crimes, is but sham philanthropy to him. He has no love for the rose-water process of getting rid of foul smells. The soft sentimentalism of the namby-pamby school gets no complimentary word from him. The unkempt ruffians who have all manner of evils coiled in their hearts, and who stand ready to ultimate those evils in crimes whenever opportunity lends itself — these "diabolical canaille" are, in his view, "a vile squad of the Devil's regiment of the line;" and, as such, without much show of compunction, he turns them over to their master. The dungeon and the halter are for them!

> "Mark it, my diabolical friend," [he says,] "I mean to lay leather on the backs of you, collars round the necks of you; and will teach you that this world is not your inheritance, nor glad to see you in it."

As matters are managed nowadays, a human creature may be left alone to struggle on through every sort of terrible temptation; surrounded by all manner of direful influences, with only the lingering remnants of the kindly feelings

which flowed into his heart in childhood, to remind him that he has capacities for the enjoyment of happiness; crushed down with poverty, with hunger, perhaps, often rasping at his vitals, he still, like a hero, manfully may struggle on, without one friendly hand stretched forth to aid him, without one sympathetic glance to cheer him in his desolation. But despair at length may settle down into his bosom, and his heart at last may break! Human hearts, however, are things which very *silently* break! By the busy world outside, the snap of that cord may be wholly unheeded! And while, perhaps, that spirit is being borne by the ministering angels into Abraham's bosom, the body which was its earthy covering very probably is hustled into some miry grave, —

"Unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown."

But suppose this same poor creature to be other than a manful battler against his evils; suppose him to be one who lightly yields to temptation; and suppose him to plunge on till the lower depths of crime are reached; and after some abominable deed — murder, or arson, or worse — has been perpetrated by the wretch; suppose the Law takes him in its grasp, and Justice seeks to deal out some adequate punishment. *Then* what tearful sympathy is expended upon him. *Then* comes the benevolence which loves notoriety, and is lavish of warm blankets and palatable dinners! *Then* you may have white-gloved, *genteel* philanthropy mouthing its puling song about "Pity for the unfortunate," and urging eloquent appeals for commutation!

What miserable after-thought is all this! Half the energy, half the real or affected sympathy rightly directed a twelvemonth before, would have rescued, perhaps, a soul from perdition.

Upon the subject of this kind of procrastinated *semblance of well-doing*, our author has something to say. It is this:

"Of Beneficence, Benevolence, and the people who come to-

gether to talk on platforms, and subscribe five pounds, there were a great many unexpected remarks to be made; but let this one for the present occasion suffice: — My sublime, benevolent friends, don't you perceive, for one thing, that here is a shockingly deceitful investment for your capital of benevolence; precisely the *worst* indeed which human ingenuity could select for you? 'Laws are unjust, temptation great,' and so forth; alas I know it, and mourn for it, and passionately call on all men to help in altering it. But according to every hypothesis as to the law, and the temptations, and the pressures towards vice, here are the individuals, who of all the society have yielded to said pressure. The others yet stand and make resistance to temptation, to the law's injustice, under all the perversities and strangling impediments there are, the rest of the society keep their feet, and struggle forward, marching under the banner of *Cosmos*, of God, and human virtue; these select Few, as I explain to you, are they who have fallen to *Chaos*, and are sworn into certain regiments of the line. These, I say, are the Elixir of the Infatuated among living mortals. If you want the worst investment for your benevolence, here you accurately have it. O my surprising friends! nowhere as here can you be certain that a given quantity of wise teaching, of benevolent trouble taken, will yield *zero* or the *minimum* of return. It is sowing wheat upon Irish quagmires.

"Yonder in those dingy habitations and shops of red-herrings and tobacco-pipes, where men have not yet quite declared for the Devil; there I say, is land; here is mere sea-beach. Thither go with your benevolence, — thither to those dingy caverns of the poor; and there *instruct*, and *drill*, and *manage*, and there will come fruit of it."

These paragraphs seem packed with royal wisdom. Let us not treat them with contempt. We see here that society has a grave work to be done, and must see that it ought to be done under the auspices of that INSTITUTION which, ceasing not to show tender forbearance to the erring, whenever kindness will soften, will yet never fail to adjudge, with apparent sternness, the proper penalty when punishment alone will restrain.

The good which is here to be done, ought not to be left for blind instinct, groping in darkness, to do; but ought to

be done by the Lord's CHURCH — a CHURCH working in the light of truth, by virtue of influx flowing from heaven. If the good which is incited to action is a mere *natural* good, we know there will be no platform there upon which the angels can act in co-operation with man; and consequently the "benevolence" of which Mr. Carlyle speaks, will simply occasionally dash out with spasmodic efforts to gain certain ends, and rarely bring forth results other than "zero."

If some system of philanthropy, based upon a plan in which the suggestions of Mr. Carlyle were made prominent — with genuine charity underlying it in all its details; — if some such system should be organized and put into vigorous operation throughout civilized society, we believe the world would at once receive such a shove toward the goal of regeneration as would give great joy in heaven.

FALSE WITNESS.

WE are commanded not to bear false witness. Few persons have an opportunity to disobey this commandment in its most literal sense; for but few are ever called to give testimony in court. But this commandment, like all the others, is a universal law, given to govern the lives of all men continually. It must therefore have a wider sense. An obvious extension of the prohibition applies it to all our words spoken of another. We must bear no false witness against our neighbor in anything we may say of him. We must not scandalize him in any way. If we either originate or give currency to any depreciatory words concerning any person which are not entirely true, we bear false witness against our neighbor.

But is there not a still wider and deeper meaning to this commandment? Is it not given to guard us against a more internal evil, to which we are all prone, and which most, perhaps all, practise; an evil which may never come to the

surface, and yet do great injustice to others, and woful harm to ourselves? Are we not commanded not to bear false witness against our neighbor, in our own hearts?

If we are too willing to think ill of our neighbor; if we catch readily at what bad things we hear of him, more readily than at the good which is said; if we form our judgments of him more from the evil we hear or can detect, than from the good we might hear if we offered it an equal welcome, or that which we might see if we sought for it with as strong a wish to find it, are we not bearing false witness against him within ourselves? The command in the Old Testament is, Thou shalt not bear false witness; the command in the New Testament is, Judge not. These are one; that in the Old Testament being the external of the internal commandment in the new. Taken together, they command us neither to say nor to think anything about our neighbor, but the truth. If in the society in which we move and are at home, more evil is said than good, and is said more easily, and if it is common in conversation to talk slightingly about our neighbors, and help the hours to pass away by gossip about their failings and weaknesses, and the things we can laugh at, then is society in danger of false witness; and we ourselves, just so far as we utter such worse than idle words, or find pleasure in them, are within that danger. Perhaps there is no habit more common than that of hearing more readily, and speaking more easily, hard words about our neighbors, than kind words. How easy it is for some persons to find fault, and how difficult for them to utter words of commendation. If one who has indulged and confirmed this propensity would but observe himself, he would find himself freely and frequently commenting upon the faults in his neighbors and in their work or conduct, and very seldom and very briefly bringing to notice their good things. If asked, "Is there not this or that good, — is there not *some* good in him or his work?" The answer might be, "Oh yes; there is good there, but" — and then he would give some reason why he did not think it well to say any-

thing about that. Of all this Swedenborg speaks so fully, so wisely, and so well, that I prefer to use his words rather than my own.

Let me first quote from A. E. 1020, the conclusion of what he says concerning this precept: —

"When a man abstains from false testimonies, understood in a moral and spiritual sense, and shuns, and is averse from them as sins, then from the Lord, through heaven, flows in the love of truth and the love of justice. And when man thence loves truth and justice, he loves the Lord, for the Lord is truth itself and justice itself; and when a man loves truth and justice, then it may be said truth and justice love him, because the Lord loves him; hence his discourses become discourses of truth, and his works become works of justice."

We next quote from the Arcana, n. 1079, 1080, 1088. In these passages Swedenborg explains and comments upon the conduct of the sons of Noah when their father "drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent." Ham saw him and reported his condition to his brethren; and they, going to their father with eyes averted, covered him with a garment. For this, Noah cursed Ham (under the name of Canaan) and blessed Shem and Japheth. This might seem a fearful punishment and a great reward for so small a matter; but it will no longer seem so when we know what these facts signified: —

"In this passage, Ham is the symbol of those who are in faith separate from charity, as is indicated by his observing the nakedness or the errors and perversities of his father; for such persons see nothing else in man. It is, however, otherwise with those whose faith originates in charity; for they observe what is good, and if they see anything evil and false, excuse, and so far as they are able endeavor to amend it, as is here related of Shem and Japheth. Where there is no charity, there is self-love, consequently hatred towards all who do not favor themselves; and hence such persons see nothing in their neighbor but his evils, and if they observe any good they either regard it as nothing or interpret it as evil. It is, however, altogether otherwise with those who are in charity. By

this are these two kinds of persons distinguished, more especially in the other world; for there such as are not in charity manifest their disposition to hatred in all they think or do; they wish to examine every one, yea, to judge every one, and desire nothing more earnestly than to discover what is evil, continually purposing in their minds to condemn, to punish, and to torment. Those, however, who are in charity scarcely see another's evils, but observe all that is good and true in him, and what they see of evil and false they interpret favorably. Such are all the angels; and this disposition they derive from the Lord, who turns all evil into good." (A. C. 1079.)

"By *his telling his brethren* is meant that he gave way to a spirit of derision. Those who are destitute of charity regard others with continual contempt and derision, and embrace every opportunity of publishing their errors." (A. C. 1080.)

"*And their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness.* In reference to this statement it may be observed that those who are not in charity, think only evil of their neighbor and do not speak anything but evil, or if they say what is good, do it with a view to insinuate themselves into the favor of him whom they flatter with commendation. Those, however, who are in charity think and speak only what is good of their neighbor; and this not to gain the favor of others, but from the Lord operating in charity. The former resemble the evil spirits, and the latter the angels who are attendant upon man; for evil spirits always excite man's evils and falses, and condemn him; whereas angels excite nothing but goods and truths, excusing what is evil and false. Hence it is evident that such as are not in charity, are under the dominion of evil spirits, by whom man has communication with hell; and that such as are in charity are governed by angels, by whom man has communication with heaven." (A. C. 1088.)

I cannot but think that if we would examine ourselves we should find that we are all of us, some more and some less, addicted to this sin. Let us ask ourselves the simple question, Do we find it easier to think and to say bad things of our neighbor than to think and say good things, and which do we oftenest? Surely a little consideration would convince us that we can never indulge this evil and dangerous

habit without strengthening the enemies of our souls, and making the work of the angels who would help us — which is always hard enough — still harder.

It is not meant that we should be insensible to evil, or refrain from calling it by its true name. This would not be well for our neighbors, or for ourselves. But we should first be sure that we see and acknowledge all the good in our neighbor, as that which we love best to see; and from that standpoint we may look upon the evil that is in him, at once kindly and justly; for that is what the angels do. But if we look first at his evils, because they give us most pleasure, and acknowledge his good only when we must, then we act as devils act.

BOOK NOTICES.

FRAGMENTS OF PHYSIOLOGY. By ABRAHAM T. LOWE, M.D. Boston: Henry A. Young & Co. 1877. 1 vol. pp. 220. Price $1.25.

THIS is an interesting book of a kind not common in our literature. Written by a physician who has for the greater part of his life been engaged in mercantile pursuits, it presents a view of the medical profession which could hardly be expected of one who is actively engaged in its duties. The author, being also an intelligent New Churchman of many years' standing, regards the phenomena of natural life from a higher point of observation than most writers on physiology. Without professing to be an exhaustive treatise, or, indeed, anything more than the "Fragments," which the title implies, his little book contains much valuable information on the subjects which form the headings of its chapters, namely, "Life," "Health," "Hygiene," "Disease," and "Cure of Disease." But the statement of physiological facts is wholly subservient to a certain ruling purpose, for the sake of which the volume was manifestly written.

That purpose is to show that all the life of man is not physical, and that there is a connection between his internal and external nature, which it is unwise to forget or disregard. The author points out the unsatisfactory character of most modern works on

physiology, in that they "recognize no life out of or above matter," and give no place whatever to the Divine Source of all existence. He says (p. 53), "Nearly all physiologists who have written upon this theme describe life as exhibited in created forms as the all of life." Then he adds:

"Is it not better to say that life finite is a gift from the Life Infinite; a gift to man to use as his own, in his freedom; another gift from the Divine; a gift clothed in a material covering, with interior material organs receptive of this life Divine, through which he is enabled to perform the uses and purposes of his being while he dwells in matter?"

This recognition of Divine and spiritual influx — of the *vis vitæ* from above — is a characteristic and valuable feature of the book. It does good service in the author's treatment not only of life, but also of health and disease. Thus, while seeking a correct definition of health, he says: —

"The human organization is composed of muscular fibres, or motive powers; of bones, immediately over which many of the larger muscles are placed, and which serve as a framework for their exercise; of blood-vessels, nerves, glands, digestive organs, chyliferous vessels; and of almost countless forms and filaments: all of which are receptive of life; and which, by their position, connection, and adaptation, constitute the human form. Over all these, the brain presides; and with all these it communicates, through its servants, the nerves, with the quickness of thought. The order of the brain, through the nerves, is received in every part of the body to which it may be directed, simultaneously with its issue. When all these forms of life are filled by an influx from the Source of life, man becomes man, — a living soul; has an internal life which renders him a spiritual, as well as a natural, being." pp. 107, 108.

In speaking of disease and its cure, our author very clearly shows the relation between mental and bodily disorders; and his suggestions on this subject are among the most interesting portions of his book. He also emphasizes that most important part of the physician's vocation, — the duty of coöperating with the inner life, whose constant effort is to restore all things to order and harmony. He says:

"When we consider how prone we are to evil, or to the abuse of the greatest gifts Heaven has vouchsafed to man — the spiritual gifts of rationality and freedom — and that every abuse of these gifts necessarily superinduces disease, with all its consequent inflictions, we behold on what a brittle tenure our life, health, and happiness depend. Truly, we might despair in view of the ever imminent liabilities of disease and dis-

tress which await us. We can look upward, however, to the constant guardianship of our inner life; to the Vis Vitae of which we have said so much, as our ever-watchful, protective angel, who is present with us from the inspiration of our first breath to the last moment of our life; who keeps ceaseless watch over us, and is always active and earnest to shield us from disease, and ever striving to bring us back to the true order of life in which man was created. If it were otherwise, we should almost despair of the health and happiness of the human race. And even with the knowledge of the kind guardianship of this inner power of life, to which we have so frequently referred, we are sometimes tempted to exclaim with the lyric poet:

> 'Our life contains ten thousand springs,
> And halts if one moves wrong;
> Strange that a harp of countless strings,
> Should keep in tune so long.'"

With these remarks and quotations we leave the subject, trusting that we have not failed to give a correct general idea of the work in question, and have shown that any one who peruses it will have the enjoyment of some very pleasant and useful reading.

J. R.

Christian Psychology: The Soul and the Body in their Correlation and Contrast. Being a new translation of Swedenborg's Tractate "De Commercio Animæ et Corporis," etc., Londonii, 1769, with Preface and Illustrative Notes. By T. M. Gorman, M.A., Hertford College, Oxford; some time Curate of St. Mary Abbott's, Kensington. London: Longman, Green, Reader & Dyer. 1875. pp. lx., 502.

If this book were only a translation of Swedenborg's work, "De Commercio Animæ et Corporis," very little else than praise could be said of it. The translation entitled "Intercourse between the Soul and the Body," commonly in use, could certainly be much improved, and in some places fails to fully meet the sense of the original; while the translation here presented by Mr. Gorman is a great improvement upon that, and in the main cannot be excepted to. There are some evidences of carelessness, which do not seriously mar the work. On the whole it must be admitted that this translation is a good one, and published by itself, or with but a few of the many notes now appended to it, it would be of great use. But the translator has added to his work two features which may increase its usefulness, but are not likely to, in our

judgment. These are a long preface, and a formidable array of "Illustrative Notes."

We are not of opinion that Swedenborg needs a commentary. It is possible that some of his works may be more readily understood with the help of an occasional note, but generally that is not the case. His style is simplicity itself. In it there is nothing of mere ornament, no words thrown in for rhetoric's sake, and no obscurity, except what may arise from the loftiness of the writer's themes, which no collocation of words or felicity of expression could adequately present, or present so as to be at once apprehended without careful attention and close thinking on the part of the reader. But especially are these things true of the little treatise of which we are writing. While in this book Swedenborg is dealing with themes ordinarily only treated of by a mist of words, he presents them with such singular clearness that we cannot believe any attentive reader can ever be in doubt about the meaning. Therefore we have not seen, and after examining Mr. Gorman's notes do not now see, the importance of such a mass of commentary or illustration as he has given us. In saying this we do not deny that the notes are generally interesting, and frequently, perhaps almost always, sufficiently apposite. But we cannot see that they add very much, after all, to what has been given in the text. Of course, the copious extracts from other works of Swedenborg, presenting more full consideration of many points treated of in the text, are often of use. But we believe that the citation of the passage where the information might be found would quite generally meet the case. The answer is obvious, many may read this book, who cannot or will not go to other works of Swedenborg, for the purpose of following up the subject, although they are furnished with the means of readily finding what is wanted; and therefore for such lazy or indifferent persons it is well to set before them the food which they would not go out of their way to partake of, though they may relish it never so much when it is thrust upon them. This, certainly, may be so, but we cannot help thinking that a likely effect will be to frighten away some readers from the bulky volume of above five hundred pages, who might be induced to read one of a tenth part of that number, into which the treatise itself might readily be put.

Laying aside, however, these two objections, that the work is sufficiently clear without notes, and that they are so much out of proportion to the text, as to present the latter in an unattractive

form, and we are disposed to concede that very much of the great mass of matter here collected, consisting almost entirely of quotations from eminent writers, scientific and philosophic, is interesting and instructive. The notes certainly show a wide range of reading and careful study of the subject of the treatise to which they are appended.

Of the preface, the most obvious criticism is that it has but little to do with the subject-matter of the work. But the writer has placed before it this quotation from the "True Christian Religion," Sect. 784, addressed "Ad Clerum": "Novum non potest intrare, ubi falsa prius ingenerata sunt, nisi haec eradicentur, quod fiet *apud Clerum*, et sic apud Laicum." The italics are Mr. Gorman's, and not Swedenborg's. This address and quotation explain what otherwise would seem singular in Mr. Gorman's preface. For why introduce this philosophic tract of Swedenborg by informing his readers that "it is but the merest justice to remark, that, with respect to the principles of Church Order, Polity and Unity, the deepest wrong is done to Swedenborg by confounding him, as is almost universally done, with the small sect founded in the year 1787, under most unhappy auspices, by a certain Robert Hindmarsh," if the writer's purpose be only to introduce by means of an appropriate preface a little work on a philosophical subject? If there is anybody who has confounded Swedenborg with a small sect, he had better be sought out and put on the right track; but we must own that we have never yet found one who labored under such a delusion. But let the writer mean what he will by his remark, and be right or not in it, it will seem to many that quite as deep a wrong will be done to Swedenborg's teachings by Mr. Gorman's assertion, a little farther on: —

"In his [Swedenborg's] theological writings, the *New Church* and *Old Church* are constant occurrences. . . . Nothing can be more certain than the fact that as used by Swedenborg, they invariably mean, respectively, *a new state* and an *old state* of Church principles and life in Churchmen. They expressly refer to a new or renewed state of Church doctrine and life *in all* 'who profess and call themselves Christians;' a state to be brought about, gradually, and in a peaceful and orderly course and manner, through the medium of the *Ministri Docentes*, that is the clergy duly appointed under public and lawful authority by Episcopal consecration, to their Sacred Office."

This, then, is the explanation of Mr. Gorman's preface, and its object is to show that Swedenborg wrote exclusively for the use of

the Clergy of the Established Church of England. That he has failed to prove, or even to attempt to prove, his proposition, seems not to deprive his dogmatic assertions of any of their force to his mind. But as he presumably wishes to convince, it seems somewhat strange that he has not attempted any real defence of his assertions. For Swedenborg he has nothing but the highest praise. The "pre-eminently Christian philosopher," "his gigantic researches into almost every department of human inquiry," his works "everywhere exhibit one pure and exalted aim, the acquisition of genuine truth and its diffusion among men;" this is the way in which he writes of Swedenborg and of his works. But of his followers, those who have associated themselves to endeavor the better to worship and live according to the doctrines taught by him, he has nothing, it would appear, but scorn to speak. If they are so very far wrong as he seems to think, it is strange that a Christian clergyman should not mingle pity with his contempt.

But to point out these things is sufficient, without dwelling on them. No one ought to permit himself to be disturbed by the mere hurling of epithets, and Mr. Gorman's references to what he calls the "small sect" are nothing more.

For the rest, this preface is well and vigorously written. While we do not believe it can accomplish the purpose at which he aims, to attract his clerical brethren of the Anglican Church to Swedenborg, it is at least interesting, and his denunciations of the Vicar of Frome, William White, Dr. Maudesly, and Cardinal Manning, who have erred in that they have not written of Swedenborg to suit him, show that Mr. Gorman can excel in invective when he chooses. The vicar, he tells us, has written a "diatribe," his readers "are made the dupes of his fallacies." Mr. White's book is a "farrago of egregious folly and vanity, literary blunders, garbled quotations, and coarse calumnies." The others have "shamefully distinguished themselves" in "most un-Christian and unmanly attempts." We agree with Mr. Gorman in thinking that these gentlemen have written wrongly of Swedenborg, but it seems a pity not to meet them with weapons more becoming the cause which is to be defended. It is well to learn a lesson of Swedenborg's own mode of defence against the attack of Dr. Ernesti.

On the whole, while we have much to complain of in this book, the translation is so good, and some of the notes are so apposite, that we must add, in concluding this notice, our opinion that, in spite of its defects, it is a useful publication. C. H. D.

WAS BRONSON ALCOTT'S SCHOOL A TYPE OF GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT? A Review of Joseph Cook's Theory of the Atonement. By WASHINGTON GLADDEN. Boston: Lockwood, Brooks & Co. 1877. pp. 64.

IN this work may be seen gratifying evidence of the influence of the truths of the Word upon another of the Orthodox clergy. Mr. Gladden begins by testifying to Mr. Cook's deserved success in certain directions, and says, "In Mr. Cook's criticisms of the materialistic philosophy (which is no philosophy); in his sharp call for the previous question, which the modern sceptics are determined not to hear; in his exposures of the flimsy logic by which the positions of godless science are often reached, — he has shown the inconclusiveness of much of the current unbelief, and has helped to strengthen the faith of men in the things that are unseen and eternal." But the author adds, later, Mr. Cook's "denials are more effective than his affirmations," and asserts that his slightly-modified theory of "substitution" in the atonement is a poorly-built structure, which will surely tumble down upon the heads of those who take refuge in it.

The twenty-seven propositions in Mr. Cook's lecture of April 16, are then reproduced *seriatim*, interspersed with caustic criticisms. He points out a "vice of Mr. Cook's method," that of "calling many things axioms which are not axioms at all. Such a misuse of language vitiates a great part of his reasoning." He refers to Mr. Cook's sweeping assertion that "evangelical scholarship abhors the idea that Christ, though innocent, was punished," and to his further statement that "the sufferings of Christ were not a penalty, but the substitute for a penalty." As an offset to this, Mr. Gladden quotes the comment of Prof. A. A. Hodge, of Princeton, that the above remark is absurd; "sin is either punished or it is not punished; there is no such thing as a substitute for punishment."

Another point which Gladden makes is, that neither God nor the law can be "satisfied" by the infliction of punishment. "Is it all one to Him, whether men do right, or whether they refuse to do right, and take the consequences? . . . We know, if we know anything of God, that no equivalents of suffering will ever compensate Him for the sins of His creatures." Another exception taken to Mr. Cook is, that God can no more transfer punishableness than He can transfer blameworthiness.

Later, Mr. Gladden examines the "corner-stone" of Mr. Cook's system, — his now famous illustration of the atonement by Bronson

Alcott's school; the rule here was that "if a pupil violated its regulations the master should substitute his own superficial chastisement for that pupil's punishment." Mr. Gladden treats the subject in this original and certainly ingenious manner: he asserts that the punishment was inflicted on the pupils, not transferred; he says, "He [Alcott] knew that their sensibilities were more easily hurt than the palms of their hands; that they would rather be whipped themselves than to whip their teacher. And, therefore, his punishment was so contrived as to strike them in the tenderest part of their nature, and thus to act as the strongest possible dissuasive from transgression." In other words, the *real* punishment was mental, not physical, and was borne by the *pupil*. Mr. Gladden continues, —

"In Bronson Alcott's school, the penalty of the law was rigorously inflicted on the transgressor. In God's government, as Mr. Cook tells us, the penalty of the law is removed from the transgressor, and 'the voluntary sacrificial chastisement' is substituted for it. The two cases, instead of being parallel, are, as anybody can see, exactly at right angles."

The most interesting part of the book, however, to New Churchmen, is the last twenty-five pages, when Mr. Gladden (whom the papers announce to be an Orthodox clergyman) presents his own views of sin, punishment, and the atonement. We quote brief and pointed extracts: —

"What is God's moral law? In its simplest statement it is to do right. . . . To do right is *to love God with all the heart, and our neighbor as ourselves*. . . . . 'This do, and thou shalt live.' . . . But what kind of life is meant? physical life, or spiritual life? Plainly, spiritual life. . . . But what is the consequence of disobedience to this law? . . . . If life be the fruit of obedience, death must be the fruit of disobedience. . . . The death that is the consequence of disobedience of spiritual law must be spiritual death. . . . As by loving God the spiritual nature is nourished, so by refusing to love Him it famishes. As the branch must wither when it is severed from the vine, so the soul must decay when it is cut off from the source of its life. It is not a judicial infliction; it is a natural result. . . . Every act of sin helps to dull the moral sense, to impair the moral judgment, to dethrone reason, and to paralyze the nobler affections. . . . As sin is in its essence a spiritual fact, so the punishment of sin must be in its essence a spiritual fact. The death that is the consequence of sin is the decay and final ruin of the spiritual nature. . . . It is not true, that by and by after death, in eternity, the penalty of the law will begin to be executed upon impenitent transgressors. The penalty of the law begins to be executed upon every transgressor at the very moment of his sin. 'To

be carnally-minded *is* death,' — not will be death by and by. . . . When the fact is once comprehended that God's law is spiritual, that its penalty is spiritual death, and that the relation between sin and its penalty is the relation between cause and effect, many things become plain. It begins to be clear, for one thing, that all talk about transferring penalty, or substituting something else for penalty, is nonsense. Nothing can be substituted for the curse that falls on the soul of a man who tells a lie. . . . He [Christ] does not change God's feelings toward us, because God has always loved us. To say that the effect of the work of the Son is to change the feelings of the Father, is to make of the Son and the Father two distinct beings. If they are really one, as we profess to believe, then what one feels and thinks, the other feels and thinks. If the feelings of the Father are changed by the act of the Son, then there are either two Gods, or the Son is not God. . . . There was no obstacle in the heart of God nor in the government of God in the way of the restoration of transgressors. The only obstacle was in the sinner's own corrupted heart and weakened will. What, then, does Christ do for us? He reconciles us to God, not God to us. . . . By receiving of the infinite fulness of His divine life, spiritual life is renewed in us. . . . A remedial and restorative work begins; our habits of thought and of feeling are changed; until at length death no longer reigns in our natures, for we are alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." A. S.

MONTHLY NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Meeting of the General Convention.

We shall not attempt in this article to give a detailed account of proceedings, — which will be furnished in due time in the published journal, — or to make even a general statement of events in their chronological order, — which has been done by the *New Jerusalem Messenger*, — but our effort will be to mention the salient points of interest and to reproduce the permanent impression which we received from the meeting.

The Convention was thinly attended, the whole number of ministers and delegates being less than seventy. A very small proportion of these was from the eastern part of the country. Seven representatives from Massachusetts, and one from Connecticut, were all who responded to the roll-call for New England. We remember but three or four who were present from New York. Illinois furnished about the same number. California, Louisiana, the District of Columbia, and, indeed, the entire South were unrepresented, with the exception of Maryland, which sent a single

minister. The only delegation which, in point of numbers, approached completeness, was from Ohio; and in this, we believe, there were several vacancies.

Yet it would be a mistake to suppose that the Convention did not fairly represent the general intelligence of the New Church in this country. A large proportion of those present were leading men in their respective localities; and we think that no phase or variety of sentiment can be said to have suffered from the absence of an able exponent. It was noticeable that the ministers in attendance constituted nearly half of the whole membership.

Perhaps the most important measure adopted at the meeting was the resolution to employ Rev. J. R. Hibbard as the general missionary of the Convention, with the understanding that all his time shall be given to its service. Urgent appeals have come from various quarters, where the church is feeble or poorly organized, asking for the recognition and help of the general body. In Tennessee, Georgia, and other places, the need is felt of visits from some well-known and experienced minister to organize societies, to administer the sacraments, and to bring the isolated and scattered members into definite relations with the whole Church. Dr. Hibbard's appointment was intended to meet this want. The experiment is to be tried for one year; and it is hoped that a work will be performed for the Convention, similar to that which Mr. Pettee has done in the Massachusetts Association.

Next in point of interest among the active doings of the Convention may be named the resolutions passed with respect to the Theological School. These were introduced by preambles rehearsing well-known facts in relation to the school, — its establishment by the Convention in 1866, its great service to the Church in educating some of her most valued ministers, the importance of sustaining it as one of the uses which belong to our largest organization, — and pledged the Convention anew to its support, calling for subscriptions to provide for its immediate necessities in the present unproductive state of its funds. The report of the Board of Managers, which accompanied the resolutions, stated that it was their intention to lengthen the annual term of instruction, and to offer increased advantages to the students. A beginning of subscriptions was made upon a paper started at the meeting.

Much attention was attracted by a report of the Committee on Ecclesiastical Affairs upon the subject of a new translation of the Scriptures. The committee are unprepared, as yet, to undertake

the work of translating, not being agreed as to the kind of translation which is needed, or the principles which should be observed in making it. Their report covered two papers, in which the subject was discussed from two different points of view. Both of these papers were read to the Convention. The first, written by Rev. Louis H. Tafel, dwelt at great length on the defects of our common English version, and elaborated the idea that Swedenborg's Latin translations of Scripture passages are the infallible standard which should be used in translating the Word. The second, by Rev. John Worcester, — which was, in the main, identical with the leading article of the present number of the Magazine, — set forth the importance of preserving an intelligible external sense of Scripture, corresponding to that which the Jews would naturally draw from it, and as free as possible from peculiar Hebraistic expressions. It was contended in this report, that a word-for-word rendition of the Hebrew would frequently not convey to the mind of an English reader the ideas which the original expressions conveyed to the Hebrew reader; and though a strictly literal translation might be serviceable for certain purposes, it could not be well adapted for common use in public worship. The committee was authorized to gather materials which might be made available in translating the Word, provided the Convention is involved in no expense thereby.

The above-mentioned points are impressed upon us as the three most important and distinctive features of this meeting, so far as its business was concerned. As regards the social sphere which prevailed, it was delightful, being as full of brotherly love as a bright summer day is of sunshine. This was doubtless owing, in part, to the peculiarly warm and friendly character of the Cincinnati Society, but must also be ascribed in no small measure to the feeling of union and harmony which prevailed in the Convention itself. On the whole, the meeting was a good and useful one, which cannot but redound to the benefit of the Church. We think that no true New Churchman can have attended it, without being made to feel more strong and hopeful.

The Ministers' Conference.

If we were closely pressed with questions, we should be obliged to confess that the Ministers' Conference did not leave behind it so pleasant an impression as the Convention. It did not present the appearance of being so united and harmonious a body. While

there were, of course, no signs of personal unfriendliness among the members, two sides or parties were pretty clearly developed at an early stage of proceedings, and continued equally manifest to the end.

This divergence of opinion first showed itself in a discussion on the duty of ministers with respect to the adaptation of truth to the states of their people. So simple and self-evident a principle as is involved in the idea of accommodating one's teaching to the minds and lives of one's hearers, called forth the strongly-expressed fear lest such a course should result in a perversion or compromise of the truth itself; and it seemed to us, — though we would not wish to speak too positively, — that certain of the brethren might be inferred to believe that the truth should never be softened or tempered in its utterance, like "the wind to the shorn lamb," but that if it came to the mind of the preacher in the form of a stone, it should go forth as a stone, even to those who asked for bread.

Had the controversy ended here, it would have seemed comparatively unimportant. But the same division-lines which appeared in this question, extended into others. The nature of Swedenborg's authority will serve as an illustration. While all agreed that he is the illumined teacher of the New Church, through whose instrumentality the second coming of the Lord is effected, there were some who apparently ascribed to him a degree of literal or verbal infallibility, which was repugnant to the feelings and belief of others. It is needless to say that the members who advocated this view of the subject, were identical with those, previously spoken of, who were inclined to look on every careful adaptation of the truth as a perilous experiment.

We speak of these things, because without them no correct idea of the Conference could possibly be given. To any one attending the seven days' meeting at Urbana, they were as patent as the meeting itself. And yet, while we write, we are reminded of wise and kindly words which were uttered, to the effect that there is great danger of magnifying differences, and that, after all, these are small as compared with the points of agreement. We echo this sentiment most cordially. One other fact we would also mention. Out of about a hundred ministers, licentiates, and students for the ministry, who constitute the total membership of the Conference, only twenty-five were present; and there can be no doubt but that the larger the number which may be in attendance at any time the greater will be the approach to unanimity, and the more

clearly it will appear that the ministers of the Church, as a whole, are in full accord with the general body of their brethren.

We trust that we shall not be misunderstood, if we venture on still another criticism. It is our opinion that the Conference busies itself too much with questions of a theoretical and unpractical character. In a certain sense, indeed, it may be said that no doctrinal or scriptural subject is unimportant; and yet there can be no doubt that some are more remote than others, from the constant every-day work of ministers. It is all well enough to consider the effect produced by "the kinds of food we eat," or to ask "who was the twelfth apostle?" or to meditate on the probable "condition of the Christian world in the far future;" but one who is earnestly striving to be the true shepherd of a flock which is contending with the common temptations and experiences of humanity will be disposed to grudge the hours and days that may be spent in the discussion of such matters. We hope that in coming years the "docket" of the Conference will be improved in this respect, and thus rendered more attractive to the great majority of our most successful workers in the ministry.

Still, we would not imply that the late meeting was without its profitable papers and debates. The report of Mr. Sewall on the Holy Supper was of a very elevating character, as was also much of the conversation which followed it. This document may properly be singled out for special mention, as the Conference voted to publish it with the minutes of the meeting. But there were other reports and communications, which visibly contributed to the common benefit and enjoyment.

The generous hospitality of the New-Church people of Urbana added much to the pleasure of their visitors, and will long be held in grateful remembrance.